

Proposal of digital marketing strategies for gastronomic tourism positioning in La Piedad de Cavadas, Michoacán among the millennial and centennial segments

Propuesta de estrategias de marketing digital para el posicionamiento del turismo gastronómico en La Piedad de Cavadas, Michoacán, México, entre los segmentos de millennials y centennials

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Abstract

The gastronomy of La Piedad de Cavadas, Michoacán, with its iconic dishes such as carnitas and tamales, reflects the identity and traditions in the region, which are rarely spread beyond the municipality. Therefore, the objective of this article was to propose digital marketing strategies to improve the positioning of culinary tourism in this location, targeting specifically the millennial and centennial segments from neighboring municipalities and states. This study was descriptive and cross-sectional. The opinions of 379 individuals were measured regarding tastes, preferences, behaviors and needs when practicing culinary tourism, as well as their familiarity with the traditional gastronomy of La Piedad. The used methodology was direct observation and surveys applied to the mentioned segment. Among the obtained results, it stands out that this segment prefers the use of social networks when selecting a tourist destination (62%). As a result, the proposed strategies include leveraging these platforms as promotion channels and collaborating with the local community to strengthen the culinary identity of the destination. This approach aims to enhance the positioning of culinary tourism in La Piedad de Cavadas, Michoacán.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, La Piedad de Cavadas, Gastronomic Tourism, Michoacán, Marketing Positioning, Millennials, Centennials.

Resumen

La gastronomía de La Piedad de Cavadas, Michoacán, con sus icónicos platillos como las carnitas y tamales, sirve como un reflejo de la identidad y tradiciones arraigadas en la región, mismos que son pocas veces difundidos fuera del municipio, por lo que el objetivo del presente artículo fue proponer estrategias de marketing digital para impulsar el posicionamiento del turismo gastronómico en dicho sitio, dirigidas a los segmentos millennials y centennials específicamente, de municipios y estados circundantes. El presente estudio fue de carácter descriptivo y transversal, en el cual se midió la opinión de 379 personas con respecto a gustos, preferencias, comportamientos y necesidades al practicar turismo gastronómico, así como, la familiaridad que tienen con la gastronomía tradicional piedadense. La metodología utilizada se basó en la observación directa y en el levantamiento de encuestas aplicadas al segmento mencionado. Dentro de los resultados obtenidos, resalta que este segmento prefiere el uso de redes sociales al momento de seleccionar un destino turístico (62%), por lo que las estrategias propuestas incluyen el aprovechamiento de ellas como canales de promoción y la colaboración con la comunidad local para fortalecer la identidad culinaria del destino y de esta forma procurar el posicionamiento del turismo gastronómico en La Piedad de Cavadas, Michoacán.

Palabras Clave: Marketing Digital, La Piedad de Cavadas, Turismo Gastronómico, Michoacán, Posicionamiento, Millennials, Centennials

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INTRODUCTION

Gastronomy is not only a sensory experience but also reflects the identity and cultural heritage of a place. By highlighting local dishes and the history behind each local recipe in different places, and through tourism, it seeks to awaken the interest and curiosity of travelers to live new and authentic gastronomic experiences, as well as to recognize the value of local food heritage, giving rise to local and regional development (Gimenes-Minasse, 2023).

Gastronomic tourism is defined as a tourism modality in growing expansion that has gained relevance in Latin America in recent years and to make trips to different and varied destinations with the objective of tasting and enjoying the local culinary culture, as well as getting involved in activities related to food production and preparation to obtain an experience of the place (García, 2019; World Food Travel Association, 2022; Nistor and Dezsi, 2022).

Thus, the objective of this research is to generate a proposal for digital marketing strategies for the positioning of gastronomic tourism in the municipalities and surrounding states of Piedad de Cavadas, Michoacán, aimed at millennials and centennials, increasing the visibility and attraction for those interested in the culinary richness of the region. Through the analysis of the characteristics of the destination and the determination of preferences of potential visitors, we seek to identify tools and digital channels to promote and disseminate the local gastronomic offer, allowing to generate a positive impact on the growth and development of tourism in La Piedad de Cavadas, Michoacán.

In addition to a digital marketing proposal, this research focuses on the importance of highlighting the unique culinary traditions of that municipality, through the strategic use of digital tools such as social networks, specialized websites and mobile applications, seeking to impact a specific segment (millennials and centennials since according to the last census conducted in the Mexican Republic by the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) in 2020, they represent 46.1% (58,166,475 people)

of the country's total population (126,014,024 people) and have grown up in a highly connected digital environment, influencing their preferences and consumption habits, in addition to being generators of market trends (Cabrera)

Determining the opportunity and relevance of using these digital tools is essential to understand how to take advantage of their reach and functionalities to enhance the impact of a marketing strategy. Likewise, knowing the behavior and preferences of the different market segments on these platforms allows to adapt messages and content more effectively, thus optimizing advertising efforts aimed at potential visitors, allowing to measure the impact that gastronomic tourism and digital strategies would generate in the destination.

According to Torruco, head of the Ministry of Tourism in Mexico (Government of Mexico, 2023), the restaurant industry represents 12.2% of businesses in Mexico and just over 2 million jobs, so gastronomic tourism supported by this industry, represents a key element for the economic growth of the different tourist destinations, in that way the inclusion of digital strategies to promote the gastronomy of Piedad de Cavadas aimed at centennials and millennials could represent a competitive advantage for the destination, because according to Langan et al. (2019), digital marketing allows creating an integrated, targeted and measurable communication that helps acquire and retain customers while building deeper relationships with them. In particular, in a study conducted in Latin America through 15 investigations in different countries from 2021 to 2023, it was concluded that digital marketing carried out by the so-called influencers or opinion leaders, has a great impact on consumer decision-making, contributing to the positioning of brands (Ita et al. 2023) or in their case of tourist destinations. According to Rodríguez-Hidalgo et al. (2023), influencers tend to attract the attention of tourists with cultural, historical, geographic, demographic and technical information, among other elements of tourist destinations that could be important before traveling. It is important to mention that the study of digital marketing strategies applied specifically to gastronomic tourism is a topic that requires further



analysis in Mexico and Latin America, since in the search for information in different repositories of scientific articles in the region (EBSCO, REDALYC, Google Scholar), from 2022 to 2024 the strategies are focused on tourism in general or to another classification of tourism other than gastronomic (sustainable, business, among others).

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to the Government of Mexico (2024), La Piedad de Cavadas, a municipality in the state of Michoacán (see appendix), is located in the north of the state. The last population and housing census conducted in 2020 by INEGI reported a population of 106,490 inhabitants. It is bordered to the north by the states of Jalisco and Guanajuato, to the east by the municipality of Numarán, to the south by Zináparo, Churintzio, Ecuandureo and to the west by Yurécuaro, the municipality has a total of 284.11 square kilometers of territory. It is known for its diversified economic activity, standing out in sectors such as agriculture, livestock, commerce and services, mainly for its production of avocado, corn, beans and other agricultural crops. It also has an important industrial activity, especially in the manufacture of animal feed and pharmaceuticals.

It also has several festivities and traditions that reflect the culture and folklore of the region, including the

Piedad fair, held in honor of the Santuario del Señor de la Piedad, patron saint of the city, which takes place in July and August with religious events, parades, artistic and recreational presentations.

Likewise, La Piedad has several tourist attractions that are worth visiting, among them, the historic center, the Ticutaco dam, Cerro Grande, the city's viewpoint, cempasúchil plantations in Rio Grande, the ruins of Zaragoza and some other natural places where you can rest or enrich yourself with the history of the city.

Gastronomy of La Piedad, Michoacán

La Piedad de Cavadas is a town known for its culinary tradition, which is proud to offer a wide variety of typical dishes that reflect the identity and culture of the region. Its cuisine is a true feast of flavors, colors and aromas that conquers the palates of locals and visitors alike (Ríos, 2014).

One of the most characteristic elements of La Piedad's gastronomy is the use of fresh and native ingredients, which are grown in the lands of Michoacán (See Table 1). The region is known for its production of fruits such as avocados, strawberries, guavas and mangos, which are widely used in the preparation of various dishes and desserts.

Table 1. Main typical dishes of La Piedad de Cavadas, Michoacán

Dish	Basic ingredients
Carnitas	Pork, lard, orange, salt.
Tamales	Corn dough, salt, pork, lard, dried corn husk.
Uchepos	Tender corn kernels, milk and sugar.
Atole de grano	Ground corn and piloncillo or sugar.
Pork feet	Pork legs, vinegar
Charales	Charales, salt, oil
Corundas	Lard, corn dough, oil, onion, tomato, panela cheese.
Enchiladas michoacanas	Tortillas, chicken, onion, carrot, potato, guajillo chile, tomato, lettuce, fresh cheese

Source: Own elaboration



Among the most outstanding dishes of La Piedad are the famous carnitas, prepared with pork meat cooked in its own fat, obtaining a tender, juicy and flavorful product. They are served with freshly made corn tortillas, spicy sauces and a variety of garnishes such as onion, cilantro and lime, so that each diner can customize their taco as they like.

Another iconic dish of the region is tamales, which are a sample of the pre-Hispanic influence in Mexican gastronomy. In La Piedad they are prepared with corn dough filled with different ingredients such as pork, chicken, chiles en rajas and wrapped in corn husks before being steamed. They are a very popular option for special celebrations as well as for everyday use.

La Piedad also stands out for its rich desserts and typical sweets such as uchepos, which are a kind of sweet tamales, made with tender corn kernels, milk and sugar and served with cream and cinnamon.

As for drinks, there is the atole de grano, which is hot and thick prepared with ground corn and sweetened with piloncillo or sugar; tequila, one of the most representative drinks of Mexico, which is also produced in the region of Michoacán and is an important part of local celebrations and traditions, cannot be left unmentioned.

The gastronomy of La Piedad de Cavadas is a sample of the richness and culinary diversity of Mexico, which has managed to maintain its traditions and ancestral techniques over time. Each dish is an expression of the passion and love for cooking and an invitation to visitors to discover and enjoy the authentic flavors of Michoacán. Being a fusion of pre-Hispanic and Spanish influences, this gastronomy has become an invaluable legacy that continues to delight diners and enrich the culture of the region. (Pérez, 2017).

Cultural and gastronomic tourism

According to the Government of Mexico (2015), cultural tourism is defined as "that tourist trip motivated by knowing, understanding and enjoying the set of distinctive features and elements, spiritual and

material, intellectual and affective that characterize a society or social group of a specific destination", it is important to note that gastronomic tourism can be derived from this, defined as a specialized form of tourism that focuses on the exploration and enjoyment of the food of a destination, combining the tasting of traditional dishes, search for ingredients, participation in culinary activities and immersion in the gastronomic culture of a specific region through visits to restaurants, fairs and specific locations to achieve it. (Gimenes-Minasse, 2023).

By practicing gastronomic tourism, tourists have the opportunity to taste traditional and regional dishes made with local ingredients, in addition to learning ancestral culinary techniques, visiting local markets and interacting with producers or traders, as well as participating in classes, tastings or other activities related to the culinary world (Gimenes-Minasse, 2023), in the same way, gastronomy represents an important factor of cultural identity that overcomes geographical barriers (Tort, 2024) and allows tourists to get involved in the knowledge of local traditions and customs.

Since 2009, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2009) reported a growth in gastronomic tourism due to the interest of tourists in discovering new culinary experiences, beyond satisfying the mere need to eat, seeking history, traditions and cultural identity of the place through its gastronomy.

In the same way, gastronomic tourism is also a source of employment and promotion of local growth, because according to the Government of Mexico (2023) the restaurant industry represents 12.2% of businesses in Mexico and just over 2 million jobs, where food producers, markets and other businesses that develop related activities, can be affected or benefited by changes of opinion or tastes of tourists interested in local cuisine. Sometimes it promotes sustainable practices in the production and consumption of food, favoring local and seasonal products, reducing the environmental impact, it also highlights the cultural exchange between tourists and the place, learning about culinary traditions, stories behind the dishes and



cultural values associated with each one, "becoming very popular and a motivation to the search for authenticity" (Osorio and López, 2017), thus, making it an enriching experience that combines the passion for food with cultural exploration, obtaining economic, cultural and sustainable benefits for destinations and local host communities.

Merino et al. (2023) mention that digital marketing strategies are crucial for the positioning of products because people use the Internet to find out about them on their websites or social networks, in this regard, Castrejón and Zurita (2023) mention that a dissemination strategy should be raised considering the cultural, artistic, gastronomic and other elements that a destination has to make them known among potential tourists. Thus, to promote and position gastronomic tourism in a destination, it is essential to implement effective marketing and advertising strategies that highlight the best places to try local food, attractive sites in the destination for food lovers, gastronomic events and festivals, and other activities that contribute to this positioning.

Digital marketing strategies

A strategy is defined by the actions taken to achieve an objective or solve a problem. A well-planned strategy is accompanied by indicators that will allow measuring its effectiveness, which are worked in such a way that they manage to capture, convince and retain customers, achieving loyalty (Granda, 2019) (Granda, 2019).

On the other hand, digital marketing is defined as the set of strategies and promotional actions that are carried out using digital media to achieve the objectives of a company or brand, which focus on the use of online platforms such as websites, social networks, email, search engines and mobile applications, to reach a specific audience, increase brand visibility and encourage interaction and conversion of users into customers (Núñez and Miranda, 2020).

Digital marketing is a key process for organizations to achieve successful growth, positioning and diffusion.

It is about creating value through the management of strategies and resources, not limiting itself to traditional marketing, but adapting to new technologies and changing consumer behavior (Yejas et al. 2016). Digital marketing management in tourism organizations should seek to respond to these changes and adapt to the needs of the market, using solid criteria and being aware of current trends.

Thus, the strategies associated with digital marketing must be designed to achieve unquestionable growth, considering the new perceptions of different market segments, using the various digital resources available for their execution. Segment personalization is a key element in digital marketing strategies (Torres, López and Montalván, 2016). By understanding and responding to the unique needs of each market segment, messages and content can be created that resonate with the target and generate greater impact.

With the presence of the internet and social networks, digital marketing offers unprecedented opportunities to reach a wider audience, generating effective results, its development goes towards market research as it gathers relevant information from the public, competition and market trends (Feo-Parrondo, 2005). In the field of marketing, research tools play a fundamental role in identifying opportunities and adapting strategies to meet the changing needs of the market, which is why they must be specifically designed to inquire, delve deeper and be used creatively to obtain valuable information in order to meet market needs (Sotomayor, 2019).

The importance of working on content marketing innovation is vital today, as the landscape is constantly evolving. The list of terms, concepts and tools needed for digital marketing is extensive and continues to grow. In today's society, the line between real and virtual, analog and digital, blurs, forms a new reality, this has generated the need to change and innovate in strategies, creating novel approaches and open lines of communication to adapt to this new reality in constant development (Lozano-Torres et al. 2021). The changes in the way of operating reach the use of information and communication technologies, being



a fundamental role in an acquisition process, being an opportunity for growth, positioning and diffusion, creating value in the management of strategies and resources, not limited to traditional marketing, but to innovation and connection with the consumer through them and thus continue to be at the forefront with solid criteria, seeking answers to the changes and behaviors of consumers according to their needs (Fernandez et al. 2022).

In digital marketing, several effective strategies can be employed to boost the success and growth of a tourist destination. One tactic is the strategic use of social media, such as Instagram, Facebook, X, and Tik tok to interact with tourists and share relevant and engaging content. For example, a food tourism agency in La Piedad de Cavadas, Michoacán, could create an Instagram account to showcase photos and videos of typical dishes from the region, organize contests and share testimonials from satisfied customers, as well as generate live videos to promote tourist attractions. Another strategy is SEO (Search Engine Optimization), which involves optimizing the content of a website or blog with keywords specific to the region, to improve its visibility in search results (Pérez, et al. 2017). For example, by including terms such as "gastronomy in La Piedad de Cavadas" or "best restaurants in Michoacán" in website content, a local tourism business could increase its online presence and attract potential visitors interested in the area's culinary offerings.

Collaboration with the local community is also a valuable marketing strategy for gastronomic tourism. A company could partner with local restaurants, chefs, producers and artisans to jointly promote the gastronomic attractions of the region. For example, they could organize joint gastronomic events, where restaurants offer tastings of typical dishes, thus creating an authentic and enriching experience for tourists.

Market positioning

Market positioning is the creation of a distinctive identity and a unique value proposition towards a goal, it is to establish specific characteristics that allow

consumers to perceive and remember the brand in a positive and differentiated way, influencing a choice and preference towards a certain offer compared to the other available options. (Hernández and Machado, 2010)

From a tourism point of view, "several places constantly compete to attract visitors and generate income for the region" (Carpio et al. 2019), so positioning becomes a crucial task to stand out and differentiate oneself in a competitive market.

Market positioning involves identifying and effectively communicating the unique and attractive features of the location to capture the attention and meet the needs of tourists (Montero, et al. 2012). Market and competitor research provide insight into the current landscape and helps identify opportunities to stand out from the competition in the present and the future. Deep knowledge of market segments and tourist preferences allows marketing efforts to be focused on specific aspects that generate a strong connection with them. Once the analysis of the various market segments has been carried out, positioning strategies can be developed that convey a unique and compelling value proposition. These strategies should highlight the attributes and benefits that make the product or service special and relevant to the target audience. It is crucial that the message is clear, coherent and consistent across all communications and customer touchpoints. (Santesmases, 2016) Likewise, high promotion is an essential tool in tourism positioning and consists of publicizing and promoting the destination through various activities and actions, seeking to generate interest in visiting the destination, as well as influence the purchasing decision of tourists. (Granda, 2019) The visitor experience plays an important role because it attributes value to the destination, promoting a deliberate decision to significantly modify the way the market sees the site, involving the feelings it evokes. (Conde and Carreón 2010)

Market segmentation

Millennials and centennials According to García (2019), market segmentation consists of dividing the



market into smaller, more homogeneous groups with similar characteristics and needs. This strategy allows for a better understanding of the audience and thus for adapting the products, services and marketing messages of tourist destinations to meet the specific demands of each segment.

Johnson (2017) mentions that there are various forms of market segmentation, and one of the most relevant in the current context is segmentation by year of birth and age. In particular, this project focuses on millennials and centennials, the former representing a generation that has grown up in the digital age and is characterized by their familiarity with technology and desire for authentic and personalized experiences. On the other hand, Centennials, also known as Generation Z, have grown up in a completely digital and connected environment. These young people show a strong inclination towards innovation, sustainability and diversity, are demanding and quality-conscious, researching and comparing products and services online before making a purchase decision, they seek and trust reviews or recommendations given by other digital users, thus, these generations influence and are influenced in their preferences and consumption habits by what they observe and perceive in digital media, and they are also generators of trends in the market (Cabrera, et al. 2023).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research was cross-sectional in nature because data collection was carried out in a specific period (July 2023) on a specific sample population (millennials and centennials who lived in municipalities or states surrounding La Piedad de Cavadas and Michoacán). The type of study was descriptive where "the researcher limits himself to measuring the presence, characteristics or distribution of a phenomenon within the study population as if it were a cut in time" (Veiga de Cabo et al. 2008, p.1). For the formulation of digital marketing strategies aimed at positioning the gastronomic tourism of La Piedad de Cavadas among potential tourists from the millennial and centennial segment who visit the city.

La metodología utilizada se basó en la observación directa y en el levantamiento de encuestas, para lo cual se desarrolló un cuestionario virtual de 17 ítems diseñado en Google Forms versión 365 para conocer las preferencias de consumo de 379 visitantes potenciales, el cual fue autoadministrado del 3 al 24 de julio de 2023, con un tiempo de respuesta de 10 minutos aproximadamente. El índice de confiabilidad empleado para estimar la homogeneidad de los ítems fue Alpha de Cronbach (Oviedo y Campo-Arias, 2005) con un resultado de 0.72.

The sample selected for this study focused on the demographic groups of Millennials and Centennials, aged between 14 and 44 years, (Mantha and Krishna, 2024) because the aim is to arouse their interest in learning about the region's gastronomy and tourist attractions through digital marketing, which they are familiar with as they are all digital natives or immigrants.

It is important to highlight that these age groups are people who are entering or already have influence in the labor and economic markets (Moscoso-Valencia, 2023), therefore, by promoting the consumption of typical dishes and tourist attractions, a positioning in the aforementioned sectors can be promoted. In addition, the above would contribute to the preservation of the traditional gastronomic and cultural knowledge of the destination.

In order to understand the attitudes and preferences of respondents regarding gastronomic tourism in the region, it is essential to analyze the data collected through the questionnaire to identify patterns and trends that will help formulate proposals for effective digital marketing strategies for the positioning of gastronomic tourism in La Piedad. Therefore, the results were examined through IBM SPSS Statistics v. 20, with the use of frequency tables and bivariate analysis.

Sample determination

The sampling was simple random since all members of the target population, which was numerous and dispersed, had the same chance of being chosen (Otzen and Manterola, 2017). The characteristics



of the population were: men and women between 14 and 44 years of age, residents of municipalities surrounding Piedad de Cavadas, Michoacán or nearby municipalities belonging to the states of Jalisco and Guanajuato, with internet access to answer the questionnaire. The recruitment of respondents was carried out in the historic centers of each municipality, shopping malls and tourist sites of each one, with the intention of collecting information from probable tourists to Piedad de Cavadas.

Taking into account the population as the total number of tourists received in La Piedad de Cavadas in the period July-December 2022 and January-June

2023 (23,983 tourists according to the Municipal Government, personal communication, July 2, 2023), where $p=q=0.5$, the sample was determined with the STATS software, with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%, resulting in 379 surveys to be applied.

RESULTS

The results obtained from the application of the measurement instrument are analyzed below.

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics of the study.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the study

Description	Generación		Género		
	Millennial	Centennial	Female	Male	Prefers not to answer
Number of people	258	121	276	100	3
Percentage	68.1	31.9	72.8	26.4	0.8

Source: Prepared by the authors

Note: Because this study is aimed at millennial and centennial population segments, the opinions collected are handled without distinction of age to generate a global proposal for the segment as a whole.

Regarding the type of place that potential tourists prefer to visit to consume food and drinks, 44.3% of respondents indicated that they like street stalls the most, while 26.4% prefer restaurants, with 24.3% preferring restaurants to consume their food, and only 5% like to consume in Foodtrucks (See table 3).

Table 3. Type of place you most like to visit to consume food and drinks

Location	Frequency	Percentage
Restaurants	100	26.4
Inns	92	24.3
Street stalls	168	44.3
Food trucks	19	5.0

Source: Prepared by the authors



Based on the approach of gastronomy as an important factor when selecting a tourist destination, it was observed that 35% of respondents say that they do take into account the gastronomy of the place to visit it, so to increase this percentage, the digital marketing strategy can be implemented: use of social networks and digital platforms to promote the destination's gastronomy and thus reach a broader audience that takes this element into account for their decision to visit. Within this proposal, food and beverage establishments, as well as public and private organizations related to tourism and gastronomy in La Piedad de Cavadas, can share attractive photographs of dishes, culinary events and testimonials from satisfied travelers to generate greater interest and desire to visit the place for its gastronomic offer. Regarding the idea of considering a destination's typical food as an enriching experience, 48.6% indicated that it is, so the creation of advertising campaigns that highlight these experiences in the destination, encouraging collaboration with restaurants, local markets and producers to guarantee the availability and quality of the products used in the municipality's typical food, is an opportune digital marketing strategy. Creating a digital gastronomic experience that promotes a unique and memorable experience that tourists want to experience in person.

In the same sense and with the intention of knowing the availability of the respondents to allocate economic resources on their trips to consume in food and beverage establishments that offer typical local food, 53.5% of the participants indicated that they were willing to use part of their budget for this, which is encouraging since it emphasizes the value of the local culinary experience. In this sense, it is important that the interested food and beverage establishments

publish their menus with prices on social networks and applications, to keep visitors informed of the gastronomic experiences offered.

Regarding the characteristics of the foods preferred by tourists, it was established that 74.4% consider the taste of the food in the establishments when making decisions about what to eat, while 92.9% consider hygiene in the preparation of food and beverages as a key factor when deciding where to eat. These findings highlight the importance of offering food with good taste and high standards of hygiene in its preparation and service in food and beverage establishments, as these factors have a decisive impact on consumers' choices when choosing a place to eat, which can also be reflected in virtual advertising shared on social networks.

With the intention of determining some type of event that would attract the attention of gastronomic tourism to La Piedad de Cavadas and promote local gastronomy, respondents were asked if they considered the organization of gastronomic events or festivals important; only 23% indicated yes, so it is a proposal that could be inadequate to attract tourists interested in authentic culinary experiences during their trips.

Likewise, 65.7% of respondents mentioned that receiving recommendations about specific food and drink places in a tourist destination is useful for planning their visit (See Table 4), so the use of social networks and the creation of live videos to emphasize these recommendations in real time can help position the destination among gastronomic tourists. Thus, encouraging interaction with followers by answering their questions and comments about specific food and drink places, using them as testimonials that serve as a tourist attraction.



Table 4. Receiving recommendations on specific food and drink locations in a tourist destination would be helpful in planning my visit.

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Totally disagree	4	1.1
Disagree	23	6.1
Indifferent	103	27.2
Agree	171	45.1
Totally agree	78	20.6

Source: Prepared by the authors

After a brief description of La Piedad de Cavadas, 46.9% of respondents mentioned that they would recommend it as a gastronomic-tourist destination (See Figure 1), which highlights the importance of

promoting the destination further, highlighting all those cultural, natural and gastronomic elements that could be attractive for tourism.

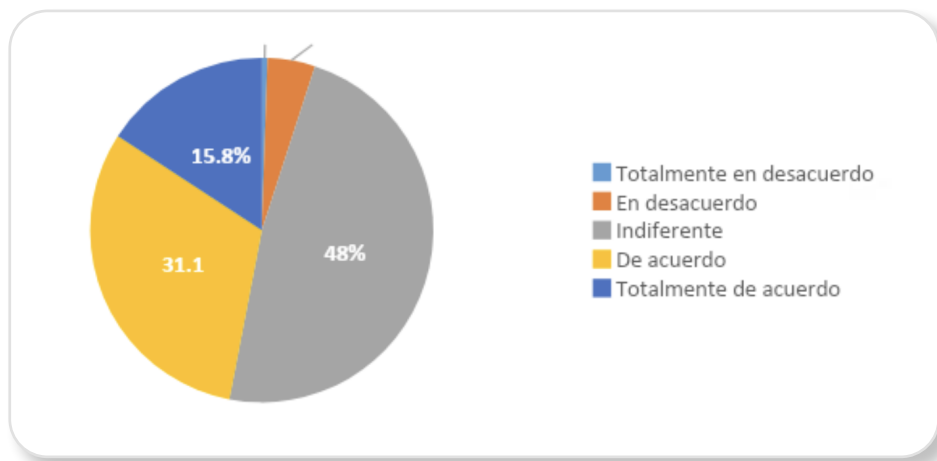


Figure 1. Response of respondents regarding recommending La Piedad as a tourist-gastronomic destination.

Source: Own elaboration

To promote gastronomic tourism in La Piedad de Cavadas, additional actions can be considered to increase the satisfaction and experience of tourists, such as improving the gastronomic offer, implementing digital marketing campaigns that highlight the attractions of the place, collaborating with influencers and gastronomic experts to expand the visibility and attractiveness of the destination. It is also advisable to continue collecting comments and opinions from

tourists to identify areas for improvement and strengthen the reputation and perception of the place as a recommended tourist and gastronomic destination.

With the intention of knowing the degree of familiarity of the respondents with the most representative typical dishes of La Piedad de Cavadas, images were used to visualize them, obtaining that carnitas are the best known with 43.8%, the second highest

percentage, with 32.7%, indicates that respondents do not recognize any of the dishes presented, so it is of crucial importance to implement marketing strategies that allow the positioning and recognition of the traditional dishes of the municipality as a tourist attraction. A well-planned and targeted digital marketing strategy can increase the visibility and appeal of

local cuisine, attracting tourists eager to try new and authentic culinary experiences during their visit to this tourist destination.

The rest of the typical dishes were recognized to a lesser extent as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Most famous dishes

Dish	Frequency	Percentage
Carnitas	166	43.8
Pork feet	41	10.8
Charales	10	2.6
Corundas	19	5.0
Enchiladas michoacanas	19	5.0
None of the above	124	32.7

Source: Own elaboration

Table 6 shows a bivariate analysis that allows determining that the millennial market segment prefers to consume food and drinks in restaurants (46), on the other hand, centennials prefer to go to street stalls (134), the above allows identifying patterns

and relationships between the preferences of places to consume food and drinks and the age of the respondents, which can be useful to guide marketing strategies or focus efforts on certain demographic groups within the surveyed population.

Table 6. Bivariate analysis: market segment and type of place most popular for consuming food and beverages.

Born between the years	Place most liked to visit to consume food and drinks				
	Restaurants	Diners	Street	Stalls Food	Trucks Total
1980 to 1995 (millennials between 29 and 44 years old)	24	46	34	2	106
1996 to 2010 (centennials between 14 and 28 years old)	76	46	134	17	273
Total	100	92	168	19	379

Source: Own elaboration



Table 7 shows a cross table that allows analyzing the relationship between the perceived usefulness of receiving recommendations on food and drink places and the probability of recommending La Piedad de Cavadas as a gastronomic tourist destination. Of the 379 participants, 139 (36.6%) would agree to recommend La Piedad de Cavadas as a gastronomic destination only because of the recommendations

received on food and drink places, so it is important to reinforce trust in advertising and recommendations for tourists, taking as a reference that 249 people (65.7%) would agree to receive recommendations on specific food and drink places in a tourist destination because they find it useful to plan their visit (Table 4), so the recommendations generated in digital media can be accepted and taken into account by potential t

Table 7. Bivariate analysis: recommendation to visit La Piedad vs. recommendation on food and drink places to plan my visit.

Strongly disagree Disagree	¿Recomendaría La Piedad como destino turístico/gastronómico?					Total
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Agree	
Indifferent	2	0	2	0	0	4
Agree	0	6	12	5	0	23
Strongly agree	0	4	65	32	2	103
Strongly disagree	0	1	81	68	21	171
Disagree	0	6	22	13	37	78

Source: Own elaboration

Thus, based on the results obtained and the adaptation proposed by Cerón-Carrillo et al. (2021, obtained from González et al. 2018), Table 8 presents the

proposal for digital marketing strategies for the positioning of gastronomic tourism in the municipality of La Piedad de Cavadas, in the selected segment.

Table 8. Proposal for digital marketing strategies for the positioning of gastronomic tourism in La Piedad de Cavadas among the millennial and centennial segments

Strategy	Dimension	Indicator	Actions
Market penetration	Image of the destination	External communication	Use of social media (Facebook, Instagram, X, Tiktok and Whatsapp) to raise awareness among tourism providers and the general population of the municipality about the importance of tourism (Álvarez et al., 2019), quality of service, among other relevant issues related to gastronomic tourism, since the active participation of the local community is essential to promote gastronomic tourism in destinations (González et al. 2020). Determination of relevant gastronomic tourist attractions (fairs, street stalls, restaurants, among others) for the creation of content marketing through videos, podcasts or live broadcasts that allow the generation of a connection with the target segment (Delgado, et al. 2018; Fernández et al. 2018 and Ramírez et al. 2019); as well as virtual reality experiences that generate expectations of the destination in tourists (Gómez et al. 2017)



Strategy	Dimension	Indicator	Actions
		Market positioning	Creation of advertising campaigns aimed at the target segment, which allow the digital dissemination of the various gastronomic elements in the municipality, as well as tourist sites linked to it, as an effective way to attract tourists interested in unique gastronomic experiences (Soto et al. 2015). Implementation of reservation and rating platforms for restaurants and gastronomic experiences for tourists, thus generating a greater reputation and positioning of the destination (Araujo et al., 2020)
	Promotion of the destination	Media advertising	Creation of content that allows generating emotional connections with potential tourists (Fernández, 2018) and disseminates the municipality's gastronomic tourism through content optimization and the use of specific keywords (Pérez, et al. 2017)
		Public relations	Carrying out advertising campaigns on social networks through local influencers or gastronomic experts (Torres, 2016; Ita et al. 2023 and Rodríguez-Hidalgo et al. 2023) that promote and disseminate gastronomic tourism among the target segment
	Customer service	Evaluation and monitoring of attention	Establishing marketing metrics that allow evaluating the impact of advertising campaigns on each of the social networks used, as well as measuring the impact according to the type of advertising used (influencers, images, live broadcasts, videos, reels, among others)
Product development	New products Improvement or modification of gastronomic products	New brands and services	Digital dissemination on social networks of the creation of brands, services, fairs, events and activities linked to gastronomic tourism that allow the attraction of millennial and centennial tourists who wish to live a new experience in a personal way (Delgado, et al. 2018; Ramírez et al. 2019 and Gimenes-Minasse, 2023).

Source: Own elaboration

DISCUSSION

Social media has been recognized as a powerful tool to create interaction with potential tourists and share authentic local gastronomic experiences (Álvarez et al., 2019). Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, X and Tik tok allow the publication of visually attractive content and testimonials from satisfied visitors, generating greater interest and curiosity about the product or service being advertised, such is the case of the gastronomy of La Piedad de Cavadas, which requires being disseminated more strongly to be recognized, since according to the data obtained in the present study, 32.7% of those surveyed do not know any traditional and representative dish of said gastronomy, which is why the proposal of digital marketing strategies that contribute to the positioning of gastronomic tourism in said municipality is imperative.

Content marketing and gastronomic narrative also play an important role in the positioning of gastronomic tourism; telling stories and creating oral descriptions that emotionally connect with the public is essential to

highlight the richness of local ingredients, traditional culinary techniques and stories behind the typical dishes of La Piedad de Cavadas (Fernández, 2018).

Optimizing content with the use of specific keywords that present and disseminate the region and its characteristics is another fundamental strategy to increase the visibility of gastronomic tourism in La Piedad de Cavadas (Pérez, et al. 2017), adapting to the needs and preferences of the different market segments. Implementing localized SEO techniques ensures that travelers interested in local gastronomy find relevant information in search engines. The active participation of the local community is essential to promote gastronomic tourism in destinations (González et al. 2020), which is why all organizations interested in La Piedad de Cavadas should seek collaboration, whether between restaurants, chefs, producers, local artisans and the government, to promote its culinary heritage through social networks and digital platforms, seeking to provide authenticity and enrich the tourist experience. As observed in the present study, in the case of millennials and centennials, it will be important



to highlight the satisfaction of their needs considering their consumption preferences (taste, hygiene of food and drinks; restaurants and street stalls as the best option for eating).

Likewise, the personalization of the message and the implementation of marketing campaigns aimed at specific segments are suggested by Soto et al. (2015) as an effective way to attract tourists interested in unique gastronomic experiences, so creating content and strategies aimed at the market segment defined as millennials and centennials represents a mandatory task, taking into account their needs, tastes and perspectives. In this sense, the use of videos and live broadcasts allows to show in real time diverse situations such as the preparation of typical dishes, visits to places of tourist interest, interviews, fairs, among other activities, generating a greater connection with the public and fostering the desire to live the experience in person (Delgado, et al. 2018).

Similarly, collaboration with local or regional influencers can also amplify the reach of digital marketing strategies and generate confidence in the gastronomic proposal of La Piedad de Cavadas (Torres, 2016).

Adding to the above, having reservation and review platforms for restaurants and gastronomic experiences is essential for the comfort and satisfaction of tourists, thus generating a greater reputation and positioning of the destination (Araujo et al., 2020).

Advertising events and gastronomic festivals in La Piedad de Cavadas through social media and other digital channels can attract tourists from the millennial and centennial segment interested in discovering the culinary diversity of the region (Ramírez et al., 2019).

Finally, the incorporation of augmented reality and virtual reality experiences can provide tourists with an immersive sample of the culture and gastronomy of La Piedad de Cavadas, generating positive expectations before their visit (Gómez et al., 2017) that may even be a decision factor for visiting the municipality.

The implementation of digital marketing strategies for the positioning of gastronomic tourism in La Piedad de Cavadas, Michoacán through the combination of the use of social media, content marketing, collaboration with the local community and other tools, can contribute to the positioning of the destination's gastronomic tourism and attract travelers interested in living authentic and native culinary experiences.

CONCLUSIONS

Among the most outstanding findings for the development of the proposal were: the millennial segment predominated as participants in this study (68.1%), in the same way, there was greater participation of female people (72.8%); 35% of participants considered that gastronomy is an important factor when selecting a tourist destination; 48.6% considered that trying the typical food of the destinations is an enriching experience and 53% indicated that they would allocate economic resources on their trips to consume it in establishments or street food and drink stalls that offer it. Finally, 65.7% of respondents indicated that receiving recommendations on specific food and drink places in a tourist destination to plan their visit would be useful, so the use of digital marketing strategies that aim to recommend places to try local cuisine, through social networks, podcasts, influencers, could be successful. This research identified some limitations that must be considered. First, obtain participation from segments different from those studied in this article, and second, because gastronomic tourism is a growing trend, it still faces challenges in terms of promotion and awareness of the different destinations, so proposing marketing strategies that position it, should consider elements of preservation and sustainability according to the characteristics and needs of each one, which can generate future lines of research such as the proposal of an advertising or content marketing campaign specific to La Piedad de Cavadas or municipalities with similar characteristics, taking into account a rigorous study that allows its timely and pertinent elaboration.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest in this document.



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ANNEXES

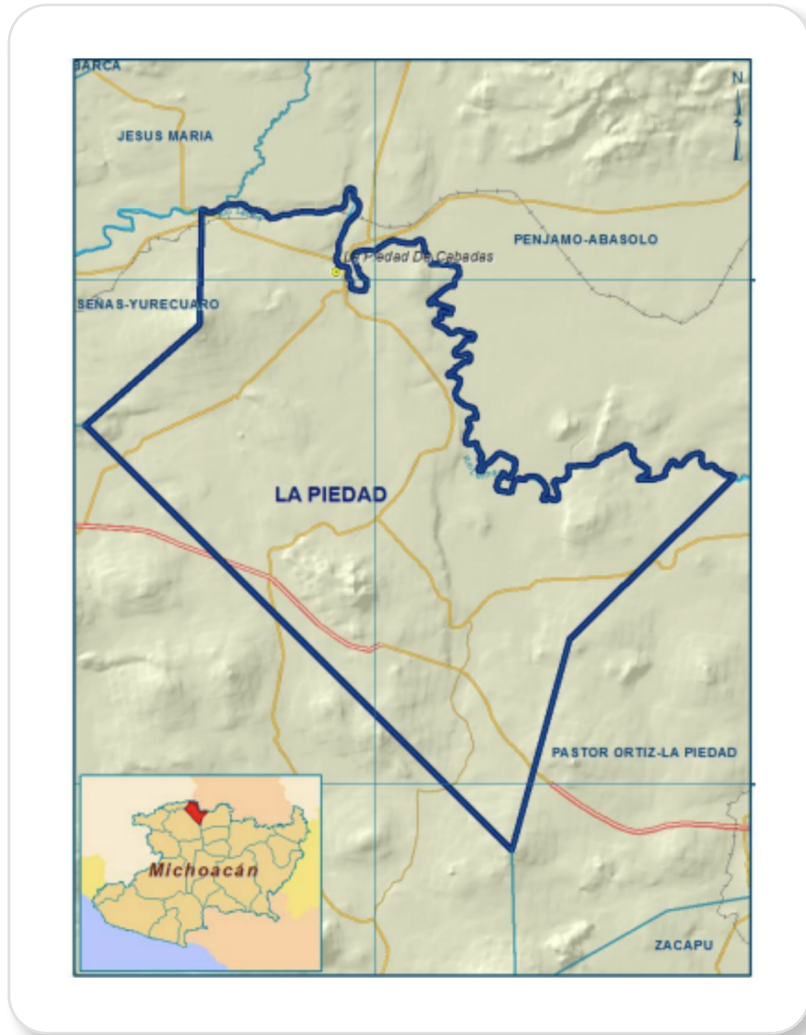


Figure 2. Location of the Municipality of La Piedad de Cavadas, Michoacán, Mexico.

Source: National Water Commission (2015)